

1956

14 December 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: DD/I

SUBJECT : Random Notes for Your Scheduled Talk with Mr. Jackson

For obvious reasons, I have confined myself to procedural problems.

(a) NSC Staff. Tentative suggestions for strengthening the role of the NSC staff follow:

1. Tighter deadlines: Admittedly difficult, firmer pressure by either Jimmy Lay or Mr. Cutler could force better compliance with scheduled deadlines. This is important for us in view of the time required to gear up the IAC machinery.

2. Assignment of responsibilities: The NSC staff should take more initiative in laying on projects, in assigning responsibilities for producing the drafts, and in spelling out terms of reference.

3. NSC staff drafting: Many papers could be more effectively drafted by the NSC staff than either by one agency or by the collective Board Assistants. If political or other reasons prevent the NSC staff from producing a first draft, greater use should be made of small Board Assistants drafting committees.

4. Procedural revisions: The Board Assistants, or a subcommittee thereof, should discuss ways and means of improving procedures. The NSC staff should table some concrete proposals for discussion.

(b) Board Assistants. The move started by Mr. Jackson to reduce the number of Planning Board meetings and thereby throw more work to the Board Assistants should be continued.

1. The Board Assistants can go still farther toward presenting more nearly finished papers to the Planning Board. The Board Assistants are still too eager to finish a draft quickly, relying on the Planning Board to tidy up the loose ends and resolve differences which could just as easily be resolved at the Board Assistants level. Major responsibility for this lies with the Chairman of the Board Assistants, who should play a more forceful role.

2. Financial appendices would be more useful if at least the current data were made available when the first draft of the policy paper was before the Board Assistants, thus permitting more realistic discussion of projected increases or decreases in aid levels.

(c) Format of NSC papers. Further experimenting with various types of papers should be tried in order to make them more useful vehicles for presenting major policy alternatives or issues to the NSC. A case in point was the North Africa paper where the splits were intra rather than inter-departmental and did not appear in the PB draft to the NSC. The State draft on the Korean paper is a step in the right direction.

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W. O. WEBB